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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/756,544

01/12/2004

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3848

23580 7590 03/01/2011
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EXAMINER

LONG, DONNELL ALAN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3754

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/01/2011

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/756,544	Applicant(s) DICKS ET AL.	
	Examiner DONNELL LONG	Art Unit 3754	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 March 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 11-21 and 34-36 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10,22-33,37 and 38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/10/2005, 1/12/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of claims 1-10, 22-33, 37, and 38 in the reply filed on August 17, 2006 is acknowledged.
2. Claims 11-21 and 34-36 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on August 17, 2006.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-6, 9, 37, and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Henfrey (GB1104359).

Regarding claim 1, Henfrey discloses a fitment and flexible container comprising:
a lower fitment member (14) including an upper surface and an opening;
a wall of the flexible container on the top surface of the lower fitment member
(Fig. 9); and

an upper fitment member including an upper and lower surface and conduit
aligned with the opening in the lower fitment.

Regarding claim 2, the upper fitment member includes a septum (29) in axial alignment with the upper fitment conduit.

Regarding claim 3, the septum is made of a material and is resilient at least to a degree.

Regarding claim 4, a layer of resilient material (11) is disposed between the upper and lower fitment.

Regarding claim 5, the fitment includes a gasket (19) between the upper and lower fitment members.

Regarding claim 6, the upper fitment member includes an elongated tube (25).

Regarding claim 9, the upper and lower fitment members inherently have some degree of impermeability or low permeability to certain gases, such as air for example.

Regarding claim 37, Henfrey discloses a fitment and flexible container comprising:

a lower fitment member (14) including an upper surface and an opening;

a wall of the flexible container on the top surface of the lower fitment member (Fig. 9); and

an upper fitment member including an upper and lower surface and conduit aligned with the opening in the lower fitment.

Regarding claim 38, the upper fitment member includes a septum (29) positioned within the conduit.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

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5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 7, 8, and 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henfrey in view of Gross (6439429).

Regarding claim 7, Henfrey DIFFERS in that it does not disclose posts as claimed. Attention, however, is directed to the Gross reference, which discloses another fitment with posts (134) for securing an upper fitment member to a lower fitment member.

It, therefore, would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Henfrey reference in view of the teachings of the Gross reference by employing posts to more effectively secure the upper and lower fitment members together.

The modified Henfrey discloses the claimed invention except for the posts being on the lower fitment as claimed. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange the posts on the bottom fitment instead of the top fitment, since it has been held that rearranging parts of an invention involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Japikse*, 86 USPQ 70.

Regarding claim 8, the method of forming the device (i.e. by fusing) is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, this limitation has not been given patentable weight.

Claims 22-27 are rejected as an obvious use of Henfrey as modified by Gross. The method of providing a flexible bag and fitment combination as claimed is considered a natural use of the Henfrey apparatus as modified by Gross, since the modified Henfrey contains all structural limitations as discussed above.

7. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henfrey in view of Sparacio et al. (4775523).

Henfrey DIFFERS in that it does not disclose that the fitment is made of a material as claim. Attention, however, is directed to the Sparacio reference, which discloses a flexible bag made partially of acrylonitrile methyl acrylate copolymer for preserving the contents of the flexible bag.

It, therefore, would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Henfrey reference in view of the teachings of the Sparacio reference by employing acrylonitrile methyl acrylate copolymer in order to preserve the contents of the bag. Further, it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

8. Claims 28-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henfrey (GB1104359) in view of Sparacio et al. (4775523) and Gross (6439429).

Henfrey discloses a fitment and flexible container comprising:
a lower fitment member (14) including an upper surface and an opening;
a wall of the flexible container on the top surface of the lower fitment member
(Fig. 9);

an upper fitment member including an upper and lower surface and conduit aligned with the opening in the lower fitment;

a layer of resilient material (11) disposed between the upper and lower fitment;

a gasket (19) between the upper and lower fitment members; and

a septum (29) in axial alignment with the upper fitment conduit.

Henfrey DIFFERS in that it does not disclose that the flexible bag is multi-layered as claim. Attention, however, is directed to the Sparacio reference, which discloses a flexible bag made of multiple layers for purposes of preserving the contents of the bag.

It, therefore, would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Henfrey reference in view of the teachings of the Sparacio reference by employing multiple layers in order to preserve the contents of the package.

The modified Henfrey DIFFERS in that it does not disclose posts as claimed. Attention, however, is directed to the Gross reference, which discloses another fitment with posts (134) for securing an upper fitment member to a lower fitment member.

It, therefore, would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the modified Henfrey reference in view of the teachings of the Gross reference by employing posts to more effectively secure the upper and lower fitment members together.

The modified Henfrey discloses the claimed invention except for the posts being on the lower fitment as claimed. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange the posts on the bottom fitment

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instead of the top fitment, since it has been held that rearranging parts of an invention involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Japikse*, 86 USPQ 70.

Claims 28-33 are rejected as an obvious use of Henfrey as modified by Sparacio and Gross. The method of increasing the shelf-life of a package as claimed is considered a natural use of the Henfrey apparatus as modified by Sparacio and Gross, since the modified Henfrey contains all structural limitations as discussed above.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DONNELL LONG whose telephone number is (571) 270-5610. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8AM-5PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, KEVIN SHAVER can be reached on (571) 272-4720. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/D. L./

Examiner, Art Unit 3754

/Kevin P. Shaver/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3754